

SCHAUMBURG, IL – Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-8), as part of her ongoing efforts to promote safe internet use, held a series of internet safety forums on Monday March 20th and Tuesday March 21st for families and students. The events, attended by more than a thousand area residents, allowed Bean and internet safety experts to outline the threats facing young internet users and offer advice on how families can protect against the increasing number of internet-based criminals.

Families from throughout the eighth district attended the public forum held Monday night at Grayslake High School. Bean and a panel of five cyber crime experts led the evening's discussion, which included recommendations on specific measures parents can take to ensure that their loved ones do not fall victim to identity thieves or child predators.

On Tuesday, Bean joined internet safety instructor Susan Chaplik at a series of student assemblies at Northwood Middle School in Woodstock, West Oak Middle School in Mundelein, and Eisenhower Middle School in Hoffman Estates. Bean and Chaplick addressed the specific concerns facing middle schoolers, including those related to the use of social networking websites and internet messaging programs.

“As a mom with teenagers, I felt it was important that we pull together a panel of experts to educate teens and their parents about internet safety,” Bean said. “With more than 87% of teens using the internet on a regular basis, this isn’t an issue we can afford to ignore.”

“The internet provides kids access to the world, but it can also bring a world of dangers into their homes. I’ve heard from so many parents in our district who are concerned about this issue, and I want to make sure we continue to provide useful information to help them protect their families.”

Monday night's panel included including Susan Chaplik from the Technology Team at Lincolnwood School District 74; Detective Shane McConnell from the Lake County High Tech Crimes Task Force; Police Chief Larry Herzog of the Grayslake Police Department; and Superintendent Dr. Catherine Finger from School District 127.

In addition to her efforts to raise public awareness of this increasingly alarming issue, Bean will soon announce the introduction of legislation to strengthen Internet safety safeguards for kids and teens.

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